

AUTOINTELLIGENCE™

Monthly automotive competitive insights from Compete

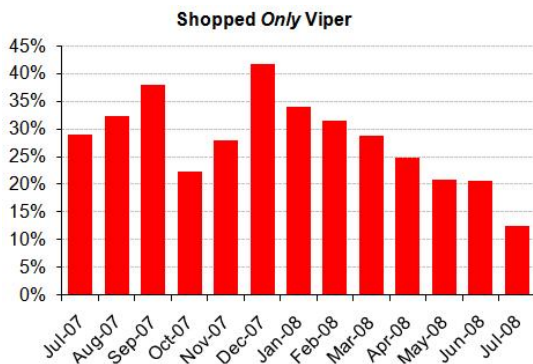
Chrysler considers selling Viper. Is that a good idea?

Recently, Chrysler announced it was reviewing its Dodge Viper business in an effort to determine if the sports car brand should be sold. From its inception, the Viper brought immediate cachet to the Chrysler and the Dodge brands, an image of power and muscle that represented the best of what Chrysler had to offer. So what's the deal about selling it? Does it make sense? Does Viper continue to add cachet to the franchise?

Compete decided to take a deeper dive into the types of people who shop for a Viper to try to determine if the franchise is attracting prospects who otherwise wouldn't consider a Dodge. For that exercise, we tapped into our database of online new vehicle prospects to build a profile of the people who shop Viper compared to those who shop Dodge cars and trucks. We also took a look at what other vehicles these prospects have on their shopping list to try to determine the extent to which Viper competes with other Chrysler products.

Indexed to the Internet Browser Population	Viper Prospects	Dodge Prospects
Auto Enthusiast	349	356
Nascar Enthusiast	384	296
Male Interest	231	146
Premium Brand Drive	405	280
Tech Savvy	294	200
Business Oriented	125	167

Viper does not attract a significantly different type of prospect than that already attracted to Dodge. For example, Viper prospects tend to be, not surprisingly, Auto Enthusiasts, Nascar Enthusiasts, Tech Savvy and Male. That means you can most likely find them at auto buff book sites and owner sites, sites related to Nascar and auto racing, and sites focused on technology. But you can find Dodge owners in the same places. And while Viper owners may be more Premium Brand Driven (visit brand name sites such as Chanel, Coach and Tiffany) than their Dodge counterparts, there isn't a huge difference between the two.

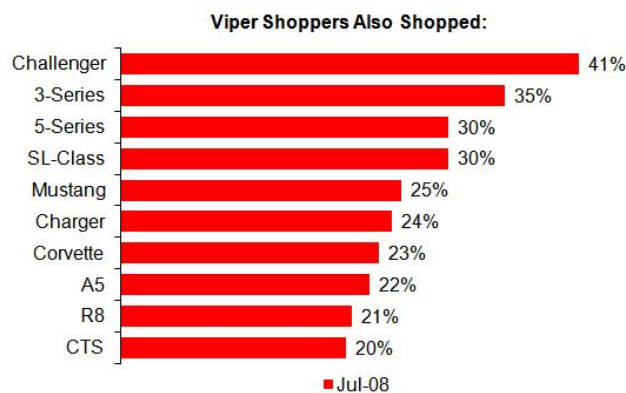


At the same time, Viper shoppers have begun to shop around more. Fewer are shopping *only* a Viper. In fact, only 13% shopped only a Viper in July 2008. That's down more than 50% from a year ago and down almost 70% from its December peak. That means more are comparing it to other models instead of focusing their shopping activities solely on the Viper.

So if they're shopping around more, what are they shopping for? Well, they're still looking at high end luxury cars like the Mercedes SL-Class and the Audi R8. But they're also shopping within the Dodge family, specifically

the Challenger and Charger. In fact, cross-shopping of Challenger hit an all time high in July while Charger cross-shopping has been at an all time high since May.

A Viper sale may make good business sense. It's not attracting an appreciably different shopper to Dodge than who is already attracted to the brand. And while it's attractive to other super luxury shoppers it's competing more with other Dodge models. And those other models – Challenger and Charge - are closer to the core of what Dodge is all about. Sure, it would be sad to see it go. But it's not like the Dodge cupboard is bare. The Challenger and Charger are more than capable of soldiering on and perhaps representing the Dodge brand even better.



Compete provides automakers with the most detailed and immediate insights into vehicle demand generation and conversion, as well as vehicle and brand competitiveness. Our services help automakers optimize marketing and incentive decisions and benchmark performance against rival actions.

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